



KELDA HELEN ROYS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
WISCONSIN ASSEMBLY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Roys Calls for Legislative Pay Freeze

Urges Employment Relations Committee to rescind scheduled salary increase

Madison, WI – Rep. Kelda Helen Roys (D-Madison) issued the following statement, requesting that the body responsible for setting legislative compensation rescind the planned two percent legislative wage increase approved in 2007-08 and slated for 2011.

“This week I joined many Assembly colleagues in petitioning the Joint Committee on Employment Relations to rescind the scheduled two percent legislative salary increase. This action would effectively freeze legislator salaries at the current level, a move that I and my Assembly Democratic colleagues support.

“Canceling the wage increase will save taxpayers an estimated \$314,000 over the next three years, and it is an important symbolic gesture at a time when Wisconsin’s economy is suffering. This cost-savings comes in addition to the \$500,000 of cuts proposed in the 2009-11 budget for the Legislature.

“Although I cannot change my own salary as a legislator, I can make my voice heard and respectfully request that the committee reconsider its decision from last session in light of the economic challenges facing our state.”

Facts About Legislative Pay:

- ✓ Wisconsin’s Constitution prohibits any increase or decrease to legislative salaries during a legislator’s term of office, meaning that 2011 is the earliest opportunity to effect any change. (*Article IV, Section 26*)
- ✓ Legislative salaries are determined by the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER), and are set based on those of all state employees. The Joint Committee on Employment Relations then reviews and approves the determinations made by OSER.
- ✓ The salaries and benefits of Wisconsin lawmakers fall well below the average of full-time legislators in other states.
- ✓ According to statistics from the United States Department of Labor, increases in wages for Wisconsin legislators are well below the rate of inflation – meaning that, as is the case for many Wisconsin workers, the real-dollar wages of Wisconsin legislators have dropped over the last 5 years.

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